8:Howell E, G-5 (1942-1944)1954
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and thrusts it into the river alongside the pole, calling upon the crocodiles to desist. This is, in fact, a common practice, since some Nuer are bound to cross rivers or crocodile-infested waterways in the course of the dry season migration.

Kuaar juath

The badge of this office is a cow-skin which he beats with a stick, and by performing this and other forms of ritual the *kuaar juath* stops the spread of disease among humans (notably small-pox). This office is also hereditary.

Kuaar yiika

The badge of this office is the *yiik* or woman's mat. The *kuaar yiika* is called in to arbitrate in cases where a woman dies in childbirth and *thung yiika* is demanded. Some Leopard-Skin families claim that this is their duty and that the *kuaar yiika* is only an assistant who should help in a subordinate capacity.

Gwan tang (*sometimes kuaar tang*)[1]

The word *tang* means 'spear-shaft'. The *gwan tang* is particularly concerned with the success of raiding parties and the performance of elaborate ritual to avoid spear-wounds to the warriors. Part of the ritual process is to break off the tip of the spear-shaft and cast it in the direction of the enemy. Some of these specialists are known as *gwan bith* (*bith* means fish-spear), but I know of only one family which claims this distinction, and their functions and the ritual they perform appear to be identical with those of the *gwan tang*.

Many of the functions of these various experts appear to overlap. This is true in general terms, but closer analysis will, I think, show that they are not identical. Thus the *kuaar kwac*, the *wut ghok*, the *kuaar thoi* and the *gwan tang* are all concerned with cattle raids and warfare. The *kuaar kwac*, however, is expected to ensure success in a more general and unspecified way, the *wut ghok* has specifically the duty of seeing that the raiders are successful in capturing cattle, the *kuaar thoi* is expected to protect them from poisoned water, and the *gwan tang* to give them success in inflicting spear-wounds on their enemies and in avoiding injuries to themselves. The *kuaar kwac* is also expected to protect them against the ghosts of slain enemies, which is one of his specific duties in cases of homicide. All experts of this kind are known as owners of *twac* (*gwan twac—ji twac*),[2] stressing their right to wear a particular skin as a badge of office, although some of them, notably the *wut ghok*, have none; the rest of the

[1] *Kuaar* is best translated as 'expert', though the word 'chief' is more often used; *gwan* (father) here simply means 'owner or possessor of'.

[2] *Twac* is a generic term for skin: *kwac* means leopard-skin, *thoan* serval cat-skin, and so on.